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Descent Of The Goddess

Durwydd Mac Tara

(With special thanks to G. B. Gardner, Freydis Vasa, Julia Phillips, and Pyrocanthus Basileus)

In ancient times, our Lord, the Horned One, was (as he still is) the Controller, the Comforter. But men know him as the dread Lord of Shadows, lonely, stern, and just.

But our Lady the Goddess oft grieved deeply for the fate of her creations as they aged and died. She would solve all mysteries, even the mystery of death, and so journeyed to the underworld.

The Guardian of the Portals challenged her: 'Strip off thy garments, lay aside thy jewels; for naught may you bring with you into this our land, for it is written that your True Self is the only fitting adornment for those in the realms of Death.'

So she laid down her garments and her jewels, and was bound, as all living must be who seek to enter the realms of Death, the Mighty One.

Such was her beauty that Death himself knelt, and laid his sword and crown at her feet, and kissed her feet, saying: 'Blessed be thy feet that have brought thee in these ways. Abide with me; but let me place my cold hand on thy heart.'

And she replied: 'Why do you cause all things that I love, and take delight in, to fade and die?'

'Lady,' replied Death, 'it is age and fate, against which I am helpless. Age causes all things to wither; but when men die at the end of time, I give them rest and peace and strength, so that they may return. But you, you are lovely. Return not, abide with me.'

And she replied, 'Nay, I love thee not and I am needed in the world of the living.'

Again Death knelt, and kissed her knees, saying: 'Blessed be thy knees that kneel before the Altar. Abide with me; let me place my cold hand on thy heart.'

And she replied, 'Nay, I love thee not and I am needed in the world of the living.'

Death (still kneeling), kissed her on the womb, saying: 'Blessed be thy organs of generation, without which none of us would be. Abide with me; let me place my cold hand on thy heart.'

And she replied, 'Nay though I feel the beginnings of love for thee, I must return to those I fully love in the world of creation.'

Death then stood, and kissed her on the breast, saying: Blessed be thy breast, formed in strength and beauty. Abide with me; let me place my cold hand on thy heart.'

And she replied, 'Nay though I feel love for thee, I must not abandon those I am responsible for, in the world of creation. I cannot do this thing, better you would return with me.'

'Lady,' replied Death, It cannot be so. If I were to leave my realm, and abandon those who seek their comfort and rest with me, then the Wheel would no longer turn. Age and weakness would overtake those whom you love, and they would have nowhere to find rest, and peace, and reunion with those who have gone before. As age and debility overtook your creations, there would quickly be no room for the new, only the withered, the tired, and the stagnant.' He then kissed her lips, saying: 'Blessed be thy lips, which shall utter the Holy Names. Abide with me; let me place my cold hand on thy heart.'

And she replied, Let us BOTH lay our hands, each unto the heart of the other, thereby claiming and uniting each unto the other. In this way may I rule my kingdom of birth, creation, and life; yet share with you your kingdom of death, rejuvenation, and rest. United in Perfect Love and Perfect Trust, that the Universe may be whole and the Wheel turn smoothly.

Death replied, 'This is indeed WISDOM, So Mote it Be!' They embraced, thus pledging their eternal love.

And he taught her all his mysteries, and gave her the necklace which is the circle of rebirth. And she taught him her mystery of the sacred cup which is the cauldron of rebirth.

They loved, and were one; for there be three great mysteries in the life of mankind, and magic controls them all. To fulfill love, you must return again at the same time and at the same place as the loved ones; and you must meet, and know, and remember, and love them again.

But to be reborn, you must die, and be made ready for a new body. And to die, you must be born; and without love, you may not be born.

And our Goddess is ever inclined to love, and mirth, and happiness; and guards and cherishes her hidden children in life, and in death she teaches the way to her communion; and even in this world she teaches them the mystery of the Magic Circle, which is placed between the worlds of men and of the Gods.

And thus we are taught of the beginnings of the wheel of the year wherein the Lord and the Lady share their rulership of the year, each offering and sharing a balance to the other, and the basis of that sharing.

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